

18 May 1973

Mr. Donald Cutler
Sterling Lord Academic Division
The Sterling Lord Agency, Inc.
660 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Mr. Cutler:

I recently wrote Tom Congdon (a college classmate, now -- as you know -- a senior editor at Doubleday) asking his advice on how to proceed with a project I have been gestating for several years: a concise history of Vietnam, concentrating on the events of the past two decades but placing them in the perspective essential to an understanding of their dynamics and evolution.

One of the questions I asked Tom was whether he thought I would be wiser to pursue this venture by direct contacts with publishers or through an agent and, if the latter, whom he would recommend. In his helpful and encouraging reply, Tom took up the agent matter frankly and informatively, spoke highly of you and suggested that I get in touch with you -- hence this letter.

I am enclosing a copy of my letter to Tom, which outlines the project in some detail, my qualifications for tackling it, and the reasons why I consider it important. This will give you the material on which his comments and recommendations were based. I am also enclosing copies of my two Foreign Affairs articles mentioned in that letter so you will have the whole package.

In addition to giving me helpful advice on agents, Tom (on his own) sent a copy of my letter to David C. Harrop, an editor in Doubleday's subsidiary Anchor Press. I held up on writing you until I had heard from Mr. Harrop since it seemed to me to be slightly unethical to discuss a possible agent-client relationship with one person while simultaneously engaging in direct dialogue with a putative publisher. On 16 May, however, Mr. Harrop wrote me a note saying that he did not think my book "would be right for Anchor" and that therefore he could not "offer much encouragement for publishing it here." Having received this turndown from Mr. Harrop, I consider that circuit closed and feel I can now contact you with a clear conscience.

If after reviewing the enclosed material you think this is a project you might be interested in helping me pursue, I would appreciate your writing me at the address below.

Sincerely yours,

George A. Carver, Jr.

Enclosures



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